

In the specification:

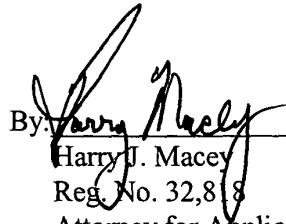
On page 1, before the heading “TECHNICAL FIELD,” please insert the following:

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)

This application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/260,623, entitled Tissue Connector Apparatus and Methods and filed March 1, 1999, which application is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety and to which we claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §120.--

If a telephone interview would advance prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
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Date: August 28, 2003

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